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GENERAL ALGER'S RECORD.

THE WAR DEPARTMENT FURNISHES THE OFFICIAL EVIDENCE OF HIS GALLANT SERVICES IN THE WAR FOR THE UNION.

General Custer's Unfavorable Report Proven to Have Been Utterly Unfounded and Cruelly Unjust.

THE ORIGINAL HOSPITAL CERTIFICATE SHOWING ALGER IN THE HOSPITAL FROM AUG. 30 TO SEPT. 5, 1864.

General Alger's Army Record Absolutely Regular and Without a Single Flaw From the Beginning to the End.

THE STRONGEST RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROMOTION BY HIS SUPERIOR OFFICERS THROUGHOUT HIS SERVICE.

The Official Records in the War Department Splendid Tribute to Alger's Bravery and Faithfulness to Every Duty.

The recent attack of the New York Sun | biographical sketches relating to General apon the military record of General Russell A. Alger has of course attracted national attention and THE TRIBUNE is gratified to now be able to show, from the official records, its cruel injustice. General Alger's gallant service as a soldier in the war for the union has been for a quarter of a century a matter of the widest public knowledge, and General Alger has himself enjoyed the esteem and affection of his army comrades of all ranks during the whole of that period. Those who were his superior officers while he was in his country's service have constantly testified their regard a soldier and citizen, and his Grand Army comrades have bestowed upon him the highest compliment within their gift by electing him amid great enthusiasm to be commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic-the grandest organization of patriots that the world has ever seen. General Alger's comrades in the army knew him for a brave soldier who never shirked a duty, who was always at the front in the face of every danger, and whose gallant service in the field won for him promotion after promotion. He was repeatedly recommended for more distinguished promotion be given him during all respects a faithful soldier who did his duty without expectation of other reward than the consciousness of

What is above stated is fact as to General Alger's military service. It will not be controverted or disbelleved by any man who served in the union army or who had personal knowledge of General Alger's military career. But now, twenty-eight years after he had been honorably discharged from his country's service in the field, an eastern newspaper finds a single recommendation which it declares is sufficient to take from Alger all the honors that he won in three long years of gallant fighting That newspaper is the New York Sun. and on February 11th it printed the editorial which is here

having served his country in its hour of

The Sun's Statement. What is this about Gen. Russell A. Alger of Michigan as a Republican candidate for President on a platform of Patriotism and

The various biographies of Gen. Alger dwell more in detail upon the beginning of his military services than on the end. He was Major in the Second Michigan Calvary, Gen. Sheridan's old regiment.

On Oct. 16, 1862, he was promoted to be Lieutenant-Colonel of the Sixth Michigan Calvary. Subsequently he was transferred to the Fifth Michigan Cavalry and became

In September, 1864, Colonel Alger and his regiment were in the Shenandoah Valley taking part in Sheridan's great campaign against Jubal Early.

About the first of that month Colonel Alger applied for ten days' leave of absence. The application was disapproved and returned by his division commander, General Wesley Merritt, because of the active operations then in progress. Upon the return of his application for leave disapproved, Colonel Alger left his regiment and went to Washington without leave. There he procured a detail on courtmartial duty in that city.

This fact was reported to General Merritt. who reported it in turn to General Shridan. Colonel Alger be dishonorably discharged from the service for being absent without

In consequence of that recommendation from Philip H. Sheridan, Colonel Russell A. Alger was discharged from the service on Sept. 20, 1864.

The record does not read that he was "disrecommended by General Sheridan was softened, and he was merely discharged. The incident terminated his military career. major-general of volunteers.

Russell Absent Alger.

GENERAL ALGER'S MANLY REPLY.

He Indignantly and Promptly Resents the Aspersion of His Military Record. This editorial was telegraphed to General Alger by Major George H. Hopkins of this city, who was in Washington on the day of its publication, and General Alger immediately telegraphed the following reply:

DETROIT, Feb. 11, 1892.-Colonel George

H. HOPKINS, Arlington Hotel, Washington, D. C.: Your telegram of this date giving editorial of the New York Sun concerning my military record is received. I was honor ably discharged from the service and was not dismissed as stated. On Aug. 25, 1864. at Shepherdstown, Virginia, on the Potomac, where we had engaged the enemy and were driven across the river by superior force. I was ordered to cover the crossing with my regiment, General Custer having crossed at the head of the brigade. I effected the cross ing and was the last man to ford the river For several days I had been ill but on duty. I went into camp that night and not being able to march the next morning, was sent with others who were sick to hospital at Annapolis, Maryland.

After remaining there a few days and re covering sufficiently to be around the camp, I was detailed on courtmartial at Washington, where I reported and served a little time and resigned, as I was not able to enter the field and did not like courtmartial service. My ordinary weight was 160 pounds, but I was reduced to 125 pounds.

Alger Never Henrd of It.

I had never heard a single word of General Custer's [not Merritt's] recommendation until during the Chicago convention in 1888, when my friends telegraphed me there was some question about my military record. I elegraphed back that it was absolutely false. I had never heard a word directly or indirectly up to that date, almost twentyfour years, that there had been any such recommendation, which I found afterward to my surprise was true. I never had any more suspicion that I was not regularly sent to hospital than anything improbable on earth. There was never a more cruel or unjust act committed by man. I served three years, participated in sixty

six battles and skirmishes; was promoted to all the grades from a captaincy to colonel and was brevetted brigadier and major-general without my application. I was never absent from my command a moment, except on account of wounds or sickness. I never received a censure from my superior officer in any way, shape or manner during the war. Had I known of the existence of such a document during the lives of General Sheridan, who was always a warm personal triend, and General Custer, who always claimed to be a friend and visited me frequently, I could easily have had the record corrected, but when I first heard of it General Sheridan was on his deathbed and unable to see any one and General Custer was dead.

Shows Custer's Animus. Along in July, 1864, General Custer requested me at several times to have his brother Thomas appointed as a lieutenant in my regiment, as he wished to have him serve on his staff. As he did not belong to my regiment I declined, and in a hot conversation about it one day he told me I would re gret it some day. I said to him I would rather resign than to have an outsider promoted into my regiment when I had deserving men yet in the ranks. He afterward prevalled upon Colonel J H. Kidd of the Sixth Michigan Cavalry, now of Ionia, Mich., to do who brought the matter to the attention of the same, which he did, and has always rethe War Department, recommending that gretted it. These facts are known to Gen-

At the battle of Front Royal, on the 16th day of August, I charged and captured a large number of prisoners with my regiment. They were sent to the rear as I pressed for ward, and General Custer gave the credit to another command and we had some hot words over it. If you will examine the honorably discharged." The punishment records of the War Department and the reccommendations made for my promotion there by my superior officers at several different times from General Custer to General Grant, After the war was over he procured in some | you will see what was thought of me. I way the brevet of brigadier-general and | never knew or suspected that there was the slightest question about my being properly These facts are not stated in the current | sent with the large number of sick and

wounded men to Annapolis, and as I said, General Custer's recommendation, if he knew the facts, was one of the most cruel outrages that was ever perpetrated upon a soldier.

I dislike very much to say anything against a dead soldier, but these are facts and a reading of the records will prove that one statement made by General Custer concerning myself in that document cannot be true, for he states that I tried to absent myself during the year, and yet but a few weeks before I left the service, and while we were in the Valley, he recommended me very strongly

I will thank you to give this dispatch the publicity that the Sun's editorial has received. It is a great wrong committed upon me and my family. Please ascertain who gave these records out from the War Department. R. A. ALGER.

DR. WOOSTER'S AFFIDAVIT.

It Shows That the Charge of Absence Without Leave Was False.

In complete substantlation of all that Gen. eral Alger says in his dispatch to Major Hopkins The Tribune printed on February 13 the following affidavit by Dr. Samuel R. Wooster, who was General Custer's brigade surgeon at the time covered by the charge made by the New York Sun. Dr. Wooster is well-known in Michigan as an honorable citizen and highly esteemed for his services during the war. His affidavit is in these words:

DETROIT, Mich., Keb. 12, 1892. General: I enlisted as assistant surgeon of the Eighth Michigan Infantry, Aug. 19, 1861, was promoted to surgeon of the First Michigan Cavalry, Feb. 26, 1863, and was mustered out Oct. 18, 1864. The First Cavalry was one of Custer's Michigan Cavalry Brigade. During the campaign of 1863 and 1864 and up to the time of my discharge from the service I was acting brigade surgeon on General Custer's staff.

At the battle of Shepherdstown. Virginia, at which I was present, and where we were forced to retire across the Potomac on account of the great strength of the enemy, I knew that General Alger, then Colonel Alger of the Fifth Michigan Cavalry, commanding his own and Sixth Michigan Cavalry, was detailed to protect the crossing of the balance of the command with the artillery and train, which he accomplished.

During the campaign General Alger's bealth was very much impaired, and the night after our crossing into Maryland from Shepherdstown he was very ill. The following morning as we were gathering the sick and wounded together to send to the hospital, J informed Colonel Alger that he was not able to march and must go to the hospital. This was customary for surgeons in the field to do when the command was on the move, and I accordingly directed Colonel Alger sent to Annapolis with others, and I distinctly remember that I told him I would forward the proper papers to him there, as we wished to

Wooster Made the Application. I made application for his leave to General Custer, reporting the facts, and supposed it was granted, and never heard to the contrary until yesterday. In my opinion there never was a more unjust act committed against a soldier than that which is reported to have been committed by General Custer in reporting him as absent without leave and recommending his dismissal.

All who knew General Alger in the war knew he was very prompt and punctual in his duties, and he would have been one of the last men in the world to disobey an order or fail to perform his duties.

If there is any person responsible for his being sent to hospital without proper order accompanying him, I am that person. Will you do General Alger and me the justice to file this sworn statement with his war record in your office?

I have the honor to be, general, Very réspectfully, your obedient servant, SAMUEL R. WOOSTER, Late Surgeon 1st Michigan Cav., Actg. Erigade Surgeon.

Adjutant-General U. S. Army, Washington, D. C. STATE OF MICHIGAN, I SS. County of Wayne Samuel R. Wooster, being duly sworn, de-

poses and says that the above statement is

GENERAL J. C. KELTON,

true in substance and fact. SAMUEL R. WOOSTER. (Signed) Sworn and subscribed before me. (Signed) WILLIAM T. DEGRAFF. Notary Public.

County of Wayne. State of Michigan The Aflidavit in the Records. The following official communication shows

the action taken by the War Department rel. ative to Dr. Wooster's affidavit quoted above: WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON CITY February 16, 1892. General Russell A. Alger: Sir-Referring to your communication of

the 12th instant, addressed to the Adjutant General, inclosing an addavit relative to your military record made by Dr. S. R. Wooster of Grand Rapids, Mich., late a Surgeon 1st Michigan Cavalry, I am directed by the Secretary of War to inform you that, in compli ance with your request, the affidavit of Dr. Wooster has been placed upon the files of this Department in connection with other papers relating to your military record. Very respectfully.

F. C. AINSWORTH, Major and Surgeon U. S. Army.

THE OFFICIAL RECORD.

The War Department's Exact Copy of

General Alger's Record On Its Files. Through the courtesy of the Secretary of War THE TRIBUNE is now able to make public the entire official record of General Alger's military career, or at least every item of it that has any bearing upon the charge brought by the New York paper which has so unjustly attacked him. The record was put in possession of THE TRIBUNE by General Alger just as he was leaving for California on the 8th instant to attend to his lumbering interests in that state. Every quotation hereinafter made from it and every document printed is from the official copy furnished by the War Department and may be verified by reference to the originals on file at Washington. In this connection we print the following extract from a letter written by Major F. C. Ainsworth to the Secretary of War:

Alger's Record "Highly Creditable." WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON CITY, Feb. 18, 1892. To the Honorable the Secretary of War: Sir-Referring to your conversation with me vesterday relative to the military record of General Alger, I beg to say that I have carefully examined that record and find so much in it that is highly creditable to him . . that I am convinced that the publication of the whole record and correspondence connected therewith would be of decided advantage to General Alger, in view of the recently published articles concerning him. * * It is doubtful if General Alger himself is fully ackised as to the character of his record, and the advisability of furnishing him a transcript of it, or of corresponding with him with reference to it, is respectfully suggested for your consideration. Very re-

F. C. AINSWORTH. (Signed) Major and Surgeon U. S. Army. Major Ainsworth's suggestion was approved by the Secretary of War, and the entire record is now in The Tribune's possession. A synopsis of it has already been published in these columns, but we append below the chronological statement just furnished by the War Department:

The Record Complete. Russell A. Alger was mustered in as capatin, Company C, Second Michigan Cavalry, September 2, 1861. [He enlisted Aug. 19. On July 12, 1862 he applied for a leave of absence for 20 days on a medical certificate,

Captain-I have the honor to report for Captain Russell A. Alger of the Second Regi-

certificate on which to ground an application for leave of absence, I do hereby certify that I have carefully examined this officer and find that in consequence of having been thrown from his ... in the stomach and is now suffering from Herpes Zoster very severely. On the foregoing he was granted 25 days

leave of absence. Aug. 7, 1862, he forwarded medical certificate from Grand Rapids, Michigan, that he would not be able to return to duty in a less period than 20 days. He is reported present on roll of Field & Staff for September, 1862, as Major, but there is no record of his muster in as of that

He tendered his resignation as Major Second Michigan Cavalry October 27, 1862, to enable him to accept the Lieutenant Colonelcy of the 6th Michigan Cavalry. His resignation was accepted to date Octo

Russell A. Alger was mustered in as Lieutenant Colonel 6th Michigan Cavalry, to date October 30, 1862, for three years, and is reported on rolls of Field & Staff of regiment as present to April 30, 1863, and on roll of June 30, 1863, he is reported promoted Colonel of the 5th Michigan Cavalry He was mustered in as Colonel 5th Michigan Cavalry to date June 11, 1863, at Washington, D. C., and is reported present on roll dated June 30, 1863. Roll of Field & Staff dated Aug. 30, 1863, reports him absent in Michigan, wounded.

Casualty sheet of 2d Brigade, 3d Division Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac, signed by General Kilpatrick, reports Colonel Alger wounded July 8, 1863, at Boonsboro, while another signed by General G. A. Custer, gives the place of casualty as Funkstown, Md. July 11, 1863, the following certificate appears in his case:

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE. Col. R. A. Alger, of the 5th Regiment of Michigan Cavalry, having applied for a certificate on which to ground an application for leave of absence, I do hereby certify that I have carefully examined this officer, and find that he is suffering from a gunshot wound of the left thigh, received in action at Boonsboro, Md. July 8, 1863, and that in consequence thereof, he is, in my opinion unnit for duty. I further declare my belief that he will not be able to resume his duties in a less

Dated at Washington, D.C., this 11th day of W. R. DEWITT, JR., Surgeon, U. S. A. Roll dated October 31, 1863, reports him present, and that dated December 31, 1863, absent, detached in conscript camp. [To Michigan for conscripts.

period than thirty (30) days without risk of per-

February 10, 1864, Colonel Alger was de tached from the Fifth Michigan Cavalry and assigned to special duty, by paragraph 20, Special Orders Number 66, from the War Department, Adjutant General's Office, and was relieved therefrom April 9, 1864, by paragraph 2. Special Orders of that date from Cavairy Corps, Army of the Potomac. May 22, 1864, he was ordered to proceed to Washington, to report to Surgeon R. O. Ab-

bott for treatment. Roll of Field and Staff dated June 30, 1864. reports him present, and that dated August 31, 1864, reports him as follows: Absent, sick, since August 27, 1864; absent without leave, Argust 28, 1864. [See hospital certificate in another column showing that Alger was in hospital from August 30 to September 5, 1864, September 5, 1864, by paragraph 2. Special Orders No. 203. Post of Annapolis, Md., he was ordered to report to the Military Governor of the Listrict of Columbia, and by paragraph 2, Special Orders No. 201, Headquarters Military District of Washington, dated September 7, 1864. he was detailed as a member of a General Court Martial to meet in Washington, September 8, 1864. He was relieved from that duty September 24, 1864, by Special Orders No. 214, of that date from Military District of Washington.

September 16, 186 to Colonel Alger ten. dered his resignation from this city, and the same was accepted September, 20, 1834, in Special Orders, No. 311, of that date from the War Department, Adjutant General's

On the day Colonel Alger tendered his resignation, in this city, General George A. Custer forwarded a communication from his headquarters, through the proper military channels, in which he st ted that Colonel Alger had left his command without author ity and after having been refused a leave of absence, and that he had directed that the colonel be reported absent without leave on the muster rolls of his regiment. This was forwarded to Brevet Major-Gen-

eral Torbert, who recommended Colonel Alger's dismissal, which recommendation having been forwarded by Major General Sheridan to the War Department, was received the same date that Colonel Alger's resignation was accepted. On September 23, 1864, the Adjutant-General notified General Sheridan that Colonel

Algerhad been honorably discharged from the service September 20, 1804, in orders from the War Department. It is proper to ald that Brigadier-General George A. Custer recommended Colonel Alger for promotion to Brigadier General in 1863. and for brevet in 1864.

The records further show that Colonel Russell A. Alger was brevetted Brigadier General United States Volunteers to date from June 11, 1865, for gallant and meritorious services during the war, and that he was brevetted Major-General United States Volunteers, to date from June 11, 1865, for gal lant and meritorious services during the

AS TO ALGER'S ABSENCES.

He was Only Absent Twice Except After the Battle of Booneville.

One of the statements made in General Custer's astonishing recommendation of September 16, 1864, which will be quoted in full was that "Colonel Alger had, two or three times previous to this, applied for a similar leave of absence, when in my opinion he was fit for duty" Bearing upon this point we print the official record:

HEADQUARTERS 5TH MICHIGAN CAVALRY, May 22, 1864. Colonel: I respectfully ask permission to be sent to hospital at Washington for reasons stated in surgeon's certificate hereunto attached. I have the honor to be, very re-

spectfully, your obedient servant, (Signed) Colonel Fifth Michigan Cavalry.

Lieutenant-Colonel Kingsbury, Assistant Adjutant-General, Cav. Corps.

The Surgeon's Certificate. Colonel Russell A. Alger having applied for a certificate on which to ground an application to report for medical treatment. I hereby certify that I have carefully examined this officer and find that he is attacked with typhomalarial fever, and that in consequence thereof he is in my opinion unfit for duty. And would further recommend that he be ordered to report for medical treatment. and I further declare my able for duty for the period of fifteen days.

(Signed) L. L. Morris, Surg. 5th Mich. Cav., 1st Brig. 1st Div. C. C. HEADQUARTERS 1st CAVALRY DIVISION, May 22d, 1864. Approved and respectfully forwarded. W. MERKITT, (Signed) Brig. Gen. Comdg.

1st Cavairy Division. The Order Issued. The following was issued May 22, 1864: HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS, May 22, 1864.

Special Orders, No. 134. 3. Upon the recommendation of the Medical Director of this Corps the following named officer will proceed to Washington and report for treatment to Surgeon R. O. Abbott. COLONEL ALGER, 5th Michigan Cavalry.

By command of Maj. Genl. SHERIDAN,

Asst. Adit. General. In pursuance of this order. Colonel Alger proceeded to Washington and reported for treatment. The surgeon's certificate shows that he was ill and there is nothing to indicate the slightest purpose on his part to shirk duty. This was the first occasion on which Colonel Alger ever made application for leave of absence on account of sickness except after the battle of Booneville, in 1862. The only other time he asked to be relieved on account of sickness or any other cause was at the time when the following documents comprised the record:

HEADQUARTERS, 5TH MICH. CAVALRY, IN THE FIELD, Aug. 12, 1864.

ment of Michigan Cavalry, having applied for a duty and to make the following explanation in possession of THE TRIBUNE, is as follows: of my absence from my command. By permission from Brig. Gen. Custer while at Washington I remained behind the

brigade and was ordered to report at Harper's Ferry on the 9th inst., which I failed to do by tailing to connect with the morning train at Washington on the 9th by being mis. informed as to its time of starting. I arrived at Harper's Ferry on the morning of the 10th inst. and was unable to find transportation until evening of the same date, my horses having been forwarded with the I have the honor, to be,

Very respectfully, Your obdt. servant, R. A. ALGER, CAPT. L. W. BARNHART, A. A. Genl., 1 Brig. 1 Div. Cavalry. HEAD QUARTERS, 1 Brig. 1 Div. C. C., Aug. 12, 1864.

Respectfully forwarded. (Signed) Brig Gen'l. Not until eight days later was the following recommendation made: Hd. Qr's. 1st Cav'y. Div'n.

Aug. 20, 1884.

Respectfully referred to Brig. Genl. Custer for his opinion as to whether further action is necessary in this matter. By command of Brig. Gen. Merritt, A. E. DANA,

Nearly a whole month elapsed before

General Custer made the recommendation which follows, Col. Alger having been with his regiment up to Aug. 28, when he went into hospital at Annapolis: HEADQUARTERS 1ST BRIG. 1ST DIV. CAV. MID. MIL. DIV., Sept. 16th, 1864.

Respectfully forwarded. Not deeming this officer's explanation of his absence to be based on good grounds, it evidently being his duty and within his power to inform himself correctly as to the time at which the train started, I am of the opinion that "further action" should be taken in his case. G. A. CUSTER. Brig. Gen'l.

Commdg. Brig. Custer's Astonishing Report. Following this indorsement came General Custer's report, which is the basis of the New York Sun's attack upon General Alger, and we print it entire, with all of the indorsements thereon, exactly as it comes from the War Department:

Headquarters 1st Brig., 1st Div. Cavalry, Middle Military Division, Sep. 16, 1864.

Capt. A. E. DANA, A. A. G., 1st Div. Cavalry: In compliance with the instructions of the Genl. Comndg. the Division I have the honor to submit the following "report in the case of Col. R. A. Alger, 5th Mich. Cavalry, stating the time at which he left the command, for what purpose, by what authority, and his present whereabouts." Col. Alger left this command the morning of the 28th of August, as it marched through Harper's Ferry to rejoin the division near Halltown; he has been absent since that date. I was not aware of his absence until this brigade halted to feed near Hall town, when Asst. Surg. St. Clair of the 1st Mich. Cavalry informed me that Col. Alger, owing to some indisposition, had remained at a house in Harper's Ferry. At the same time Asst. Surg. St. Clair presented, for my approval, an application from Col. Alger for leave of absence for twenty days. As Col. Alger had, two or three times previous to this, applied for a similar leave of absence, when in my opinion he was fit for duty and which opinion subsequently proved to be correct as it has in the case now referred to, I returned Col. Alger's application without my approval. He failed to join his command. first heard of him again, as stopping at the Eutaw House, in Baltimore, Md. I now have authentic and reliable information that he is staving at one of the hotels in Washington, D. C. and that he has been placed on duty, in the latter city, as a member of a General Court Martial. How he came to be detailed I cannot say. He left this command without authority and after having been refused a leave of absence from these Headquarters. And I have directed that he be reported

'absent without leave" on the muster rolls of his regiment. Respectfully Submitted, G. A. CUSTER. Brig. Genl. Com. Brig. HEADQUARTERS, 1ST CAV'Y. DIVN., September 17th, 1864. Respectfully forwarded for the action of

the Chief of Cavairy. The case mentioned within is the third in which Col. Alger has absented himself from the command without proper authority since the commencement of the present year's campaign. Severe measures should be taken to prevent a recurrence

(Signed.) W. MERRITT Brig.-Gen. Comdg. HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY. MID. MH., DIV. September 17, 1864.

Respectfully forwarded with the recommendation that he be dismissed from the service for absence without leave subject to the approval of the President. Such cases are too numerous and the scarcity of officers requires immediate action to be taken. (Signed,) A. T. A. TORBERT.

Brvt. Maj.-Gen. and Chief of Cavalry. HEADQUARTERS MIDDLE MILITARY DIVISION, September 18, 1864. Respectfully forwarded. I understand that

Colonel Alger is on some duty at Washington, but it is evident he has left his command without authority, and it appears that he has done so before. I have always considered Colonel Alger a good officer but cannot excuse his conduct or withhold my approval of the recommendation of his immediate command-(Signed.) P H. SHERIDAN,

Maj. Gen. WAR DEPARTMENT, A. G. O., September 23, 1834. Respectfully returned. This officer was honorably discharged from the service by S. O. 311. Sept. 20, 1864, from this office. (Signed.) THOMAS M. VINCENT,

Asst. Adjt. General.

A MONSTROUS INJUSTICE.

Proof That Above Report and Recommendations Were Unjust and Malicious. It is not possible to fitly characterize the injustice done to General-then Colonel-Alger in the report and recommendations printed above. They had no result, for Colonel Alger, being in entire and absolute ignorance of them, presented his resignation on the 16th of September, 1864, for reasons which were amply stated in the document itself, and as it was accepted he was honorable discharged. The entire history of Alger's resignation will be presented later on, but it must be said here that General Alger did not know until twenty-four years later that such adverse recommendations were in existence, and that the affidavit of Dr. Samuel R. Wooster, printed near the beginning of this record, fully answers them and shows General Alger's record to have been, in fact, absolutely straight and his conduct entirely correct. General Custer's statement that Alger should be censured because he had been misinformed as to the terms of a railroad time table is at least frivolous and seems not less than ridiculous in view of the fact that the command was not in active ser-

The documents printed above comprise the only applications to be relieved ever made by Colonel Alger and furnish all the basis there was for General Custer's report that he had made application for leave "three times." They show the falsity of that statement, and they show that Colonel Alger was never absent from his command for a moment without good cause and proper authority.

General Custer's report says: "I first heard of him again as stopping at the Eutaw House in Baltimore, Md." General Alger remembers having gone to the Eutaw House, as trains were then running very irregularly, but here is a certificate from the officer of Hospital Medical Department, dated Annapolis, Sept. 5, 1864, which clears up the whole matter and shows conclusively the date on which Alger left the Annapolis hospital. The document, which General Alger has fortun-

done with it since I enlisted. Joined the hospital Sty order settled by Cav., e lest.

Mich Washington, Account for b ce with G. O. WASHINGTON, 16th Sept., 1864. Accepted.

The following official documents complete the record affecting this matter: HEADQUARTERS, ANNAPOLIS, MD.

Mich that

Sept. 5, 1864. Special Orders. 2. In pursuant to instructions received from the War Department, A. G. O., Washington. D. C., the following named officers at the Officers' Hospital at Annapolis, Md. having been reported by the Surgeon in charge, as being fit for light duty, are hereby ordered to report without delay, to the Mil

itary Governor of the District of Washing-

ton, for Court Martial duty. COLONEL R. A. ALGER, 5th Mich. Cavalry. By order of Adrian R. Root, 94 N. Y. Vols. JOHN S. WHARTON. First Lieut, 14 U.S. Infantry, Post Adjutant, WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT

GENERAL'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON, September 15, 1864. Special Orders, No. 305. (Extract). 36. So much of Special Orders, No. 203, September 5, 1864, from Headquarters, Annapolis, Maryland, as, pursuant to instructions from this office, directed the following named officers to report to the

Military Governor of the District of Wash-

on, for court martial duty, is hereby

Assistant Adjutant General.

COLONEL R. A. ALGER, Fifth Michigan By order of the Secretary of War. E. D. TOWNSEND.

Colonel R. A. Alger, Through Colonel Wisewell, Military Gover It will be noticed that Colonel Alger reported for duty August 12, 1864, remaining in the field until sent to hospital at Annapolis on Aug. 28, and that General Custer's endorsement, quoted above, was made September 18, a month and four days subsequent. There is absolutely no foundation for the charge that Colonel Alger endeavored to shirk any duty or that he was ever absent from his command without proper authority.

RESIGNATION FROM THE SERVICE. Reasons for Which Alger Resigned and

Official Record in that Connection. Colonel Alger had intended to resign from the army more than a month previous to the time when he actually did do so, and he found good reason to do so in the following described condition of military operations as affecting his command. Referring to this period. General Alger says: "At the time the cavalry moved from City Point in front of Petersburg, to the Shenandoah Valley, it was generally believed by many of the officers and men of the command that they were going to the Shenandoah Valley to watch raiders, that being a convenient way to come down the valley to invade Pennsylvania and Maryland, and it was also known to be an excellent place to procure forage for the horses; the operations about Petersburg having become a state of siege rather than the scene of active operations. My private business at that time was such that when in Washington I decided to retire from the service and attend to my business affairs, as what little I had was in danger of being swept from me. I therefore, being simply temporarily relieved from detached service, sent through my member of Congress, Honorable F. W. Kellogg, to the President, my resignation." General Alger has placed this document in

HEADQUARTERS 5TH MICHIGAN CAVALRY,) WASHINGTON, 6 Aug., 1864.

the hands of THE TRIBUNE, and it reads as

Hon. E. M. Stanton. Secretary of War.

I have the honor herewith to tender my resignation as Colonel of this regiment.

My reasons are: I. I have been in the military service of the U.S. nearly three years, having enlisted in August, 1861, and have been off duty but eight days except on account of wounds, six of those eight days being on account of sick-

II. My private business at home has become such and in such condition that my presence there to attend to it is necessary in order to enable me to save anything from it. I have the honor to be.

Very respectfully, Your obt. servt .. (Signed) R. A. ALGER, Col. Comdg. President Lincoln endorsed this paper as

Let this resignation be accepted. (Signed) A. LINCOLN, Aug. 8, 1864. It will be noticed that the date of this acceptance is a month and eight days earlier than the date of his final resignation, which was tendered upon September 16.

The indorsement just quoted is in President Lincoln's own hand-writing and the original document is, as before stated, in THE TRIB-UNE's possession. Colonel Alger put this accepted resignation in his pocket, intending to present it to the Secretary of War and go home to attend to his business affairs. But learning, after leaving the President, that there was prospect of an active campaign in the Valley, he did not present the resignation at the War Department, but hastily arranging his business as well as was possible started for the scene of operations, arriving, on account of his misinformation as to the time of the departure of the train, one day late. It will be seen that with an accepted resignation in his pocket he need not have reported to his brigade commander at all if he had desired to leave the service at that time. He had only to present the resignation to the Secretary of War to be relieved entirely of further service and to procure his honorable discharge. The cruelty and injustice of the report of General Custer and of the recommendations of both Custer and Merritt, under these circumstances, will be at once apparent to everybody. There was no justification for them, and the evidence that Alger acted from motives of the highest patriotism and with the courage that characterized his whole military career, is simply irrefutable.

The Final Resignation. Colonel Alger did not resign in August, therefore, as he had intended, but went to the his resignation, and the reasons for his ad tion at this time are succinctly stated in the document itself, which is herewith printed: WASHINGTON, D. C., 16th September, 1864.

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War: Sir-I have the honor to tender herewith my resignation as colonel of the 5th Michigan Cavalry, for the following reasons: 1st. I entered the service, enlisting Au-

gust 26th, 1861, and have never had a leave of absence, except when wounded. 2d. My private business is in such an unsettled condition that unless I can be at home in October to settle it, I shall be obliged to sacrifice what I have, as nothing has been

3d. The health of my family is such as to require my presence as soon as possible. My regiment, which is small, is ably officered. Its term of service expires in August, 1865. I have been on duty with my command since the army moved, May 4th, having lost but six days during the time, and that by sligh? sunstroke, until August 28th, when I was sent to hospital at Annapolis, since which time I have been ordered here for light duty, where I now am serving.

Since entering the service I have participated in sixty-seven battles and skirmishes. I have been wounded twice. I have the honor, Sir, to be, very respect

R. A. ALGER, Col. 5th Mich. Cavalry. INDORSEMENTS. R. A. Alger, Colonel 5th Michigan Cavalry, tenders his resignation.

Sec. of War.

Let this resignation be accepted. (Signed) A. Lincoln. Sept. 17, 1864. (Signed) EDWIN M. STANTON.

Sept. 19, 1864. WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON, September, 20th, 1864. Special Orders, No. 311. (Extract.)

nonorably discharged the service of the United States. By order of the Secretary of War: (Signed) E. D. TOWNSEND,

Col. R. A. Alger, 5th Michigan Cavalry,

having tendered his resignation, is hereby

ALGER'S GALLANT SERVICES.

Repeatedly Recommended for Promotion by His Superior Officers.

THE TRIBUNE some time age printed a number of the recommendations made for Colonel Alger's promotion, but they will bear repetition in this connection. They are splendid testimonials to the constant faithfulness of Colonel Alger and to his unflinching courage in every emergency of war. His whole record is an overwhelming refutation of the ridiculous charge that he ever shirked his duty as a soldier. The recommendations which follow, taken from the official records, tell an eloquent story of Alger's devotion to the cause of his country.

High Praise From Custer. HEADQUARTERS 2ND BRIGADE, 3rd Division Calvary Corps, Army of the Potomac, Oct. 19, 1863, Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secy of War. Sir-I have the honor to recommend to you for promotion to the rank of Brigadier-General,

Colonel Russell A. Alger of the 5th Michigan Calvary, for meritorious conduct in the field. as also for his thorough discipline in his Regt., both in camp and on the march; and his untiring efforts for the welfare of his Regt. and the good of the service. Col. Alger has proved himself worthy of the highest confidence. At Hanover, Gettysburg, where at the head of his Regt in the thickest of the fight he showed great bravery and skill, Hagerstown, Williamsport and Boonsboro, July 8th, where he was severely wounded while gallantly leading his Regt. in one of the severest cavalry engagements of the war, Colonel Alger distinguished himself for his bravery, coolness and skill

which particularly shows his fitness for a cavalry commander. Since recovering from his wound at Culpepper, Racoon Ford. Brandy Station on the 13th inst. and again today at Bucktown, he has distinguished himself alike for his bravery and skill, showing his competency in every respect for a command, and for the cavalry service. As an officer and a gentleman Colonel Alger justly enjoys the highest esteem

of both his command and his commanding Ever ready to perform his duty at any and all times, and zealous in the cause for which we are fighting, he has proved himself worthy. of the highest confidence of all. I therefore earnestly and cordially recommend him to your consideration, fully believing that any trust reposed to him will be skilfully and faithfully performed by him, with honor to himself and credit to our army and to the

noble cause in which we are engaged. I have the honor to be, sir, Very respectfully, your obt. servt., (Signed) G. A. Custer,

Brig. Genl. Vols. Indorsements From High Officers. [indorsements on the foregoing.] Headquarters Third Cav. Div., Oct. 20, 1863, I have witnessed the gallantry and skill of Col. Alger, comdg 5th Mich. Cavalry on many occasions. His prompt and energetic action yesterday saved a large portion of my command from being captured, which would have resulted from the confusion into which they were at one time thrown. I most cheerfully indorse the recommendation of Brig.-Gen.

Custer, believing Col. Alger to be in every re-

spect deserving of the position to which he

(Signed) J. KILPATRICK, Brig. Gen. Vols. Comdg. Div. HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS. Oct. 20 1863. This recommendation is respectfully forwarded, and most favorably recommended, Col. Alger will make an energetic, efficient brigade commander. His services in that capacity are much needed in this corps.

(Signed) A. PLEASANTON, Major-Gen. Comdg. HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC Oct 22, 1863. Respectfully forwarded with the remark that this recommendation has been sent in without any call from me for recommenda-

tion for the appointment of Brig.-General. (Signed) GEO. G. MEADE. Maj. Gen. Comdg. Respectfully submitted to the General is Chief U. S. A.

JAS. A. HARDIE,

A. A. General.

Congressman Kellogg Indorses Him. WASHINGTON, Dec. 14th, 1863. To sthe Secretary of War: SIR-Colonel Russell A. Alger of the Fifth Regiment Michigan Cavalry has been recommended for promotion by Generals Custer, Kilpatrick, Pleasanton and Meade, all his superiors up to Comman. der.in-Chief, without solicitation on my part, and I most earnestly desire it myself.

(Signed)

The death of the lamented General Buford leaves a vacancy in the cavalry corps some one must be appointed to. Generals Custer or Merritt will no doubt be assigned to his command, and a full brigade will then need a general. Colonel Alger has distinguished himself on every possible occasion, always leading his regiment. Like the other cavalry officers-Custer, Merritt, Kilpatrick and Pleasanton-is a gallant young man and always ready. I believe he will make one of the best of cavalry officers or I would not recommend him now. Michigan has fewer generals than any other state in the union in proportion to the

number of troops furnished. Colonel Alger was educated, I may say, by General Gordon Granger who promoted him to the rank of major long ago when in Tennessee, and remarked when he left that "he was the only officer in his regiment he had never had occasion to reprimand." I hope you will appoint him brigadier-general and assign him to a cavalry command, which he

has had ever since he entered the service. I have the honor to be your obedient servant. F. W. KELLOGG. (Signed) HON. E. M. STANTON.

Secretary of War, Washington. Another One From Custer. HEADQUARTERS 1st Brigade, 1st Division, Cavalry Corps, Army

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War. ately preserved, and the original of which is | front. Nearly six weeks later he tendered | Colonel R. A. Alger, Fifth Michigan Cavalry

of the Potomac, June 26th, 1864. I have the honor to recommend that